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PETITION

OF THE

Proprietors of Lands in the Island of *Saint John*, in the Gulf of the River *Saint Lawrence*.

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U.S.

As Agent for
Wm Grant for
the half of Lot
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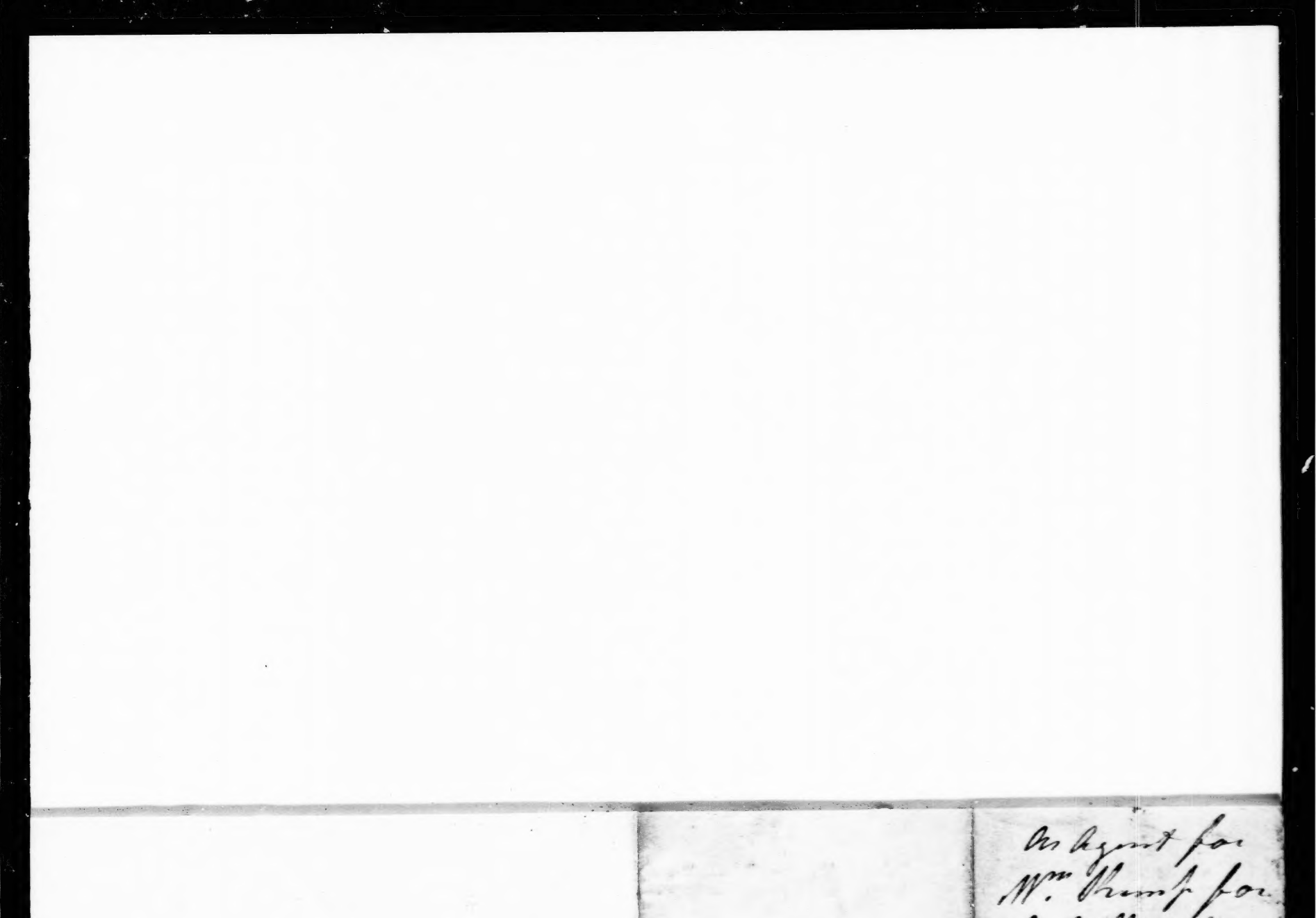
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To the Right Honourable the Committee of his Majeſty's moſt Honourable Privy Council for Plantation Affairs.

PETITION of the Proprietors of Lands in the Iſland of *Saint John*, in the Gulf of the River *Saint Lawrence*;

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

1. THAT your Petitioners have been for a Number of Years Proprietors of the Iſland of *St. John*.

2. THAT, from a Variety of Circumſtances, they have not hitherto been enabled, *though in an improving State*, to render the ſaid Iſland, either to themſelves or the Mother Country, of *that Importance of which it is capable*.

3. THAT they have of late taken great Pains to obtain Information, and have maturely conſidered in what Manner they might beſt promote the Intereſt of the ſaid Iſland, without effecting thereby the Intereſt of the parent State; and the Reſult of their Inquiries is now, with becoming Deference, ſubmitted to your Lordſhips' Conſideration.

4. IN the firſt Place, your Petitioners beg Leave to repreſent to your Lordſhips that the Iſland of *Saint John* occupies a moſt important Situation at the Entrance of the Gulf of *Saint Lawrence*, and is nearly centrical to his Majeſty's remaining Colonies.

5. THAT it has a Number of good and ſafe Harbours; that the ſoil is capable of the higheſt Degree of Cultivation, produces vaſt Quantities of uſeful Timber, and that its Shores abound with all Kinds of Fiſh.

6. THAT, therefore, poſſeſſing as it does from Nature ſuch local Advantages, it ſeems only to require the Aid of a ſufficient Number of induſtrious Inhabitants to make it a flouriſhing Colony, *and capable in Time of contributing a large Supply of Proviſions to the neighbouring Fiſheries*.

7. THAT, if ſuch Indulgences as your Petitioners mean to propoſe to your Lordſhips ſhall be allowed them, it will be an Inducement to Numbers of Settlers to reſort to the Iſland of *Saint John* from the United States.

8. THAT by this Means the Lands will be cultivated, ample Supplies will be provided for the *Weſt Indies* and other *Britiſh* Settlements that may ſtand in Need of them, the Fiſheries on the Coaſt will be extended; and, at the ſame Time that a Channel will be opened for a large Conſumption of the manufactured Articles of this Country, their Fiſheries and Commerce will be no inconſiderable Nurſeries for Seamen for the *Britiſh* Navy.

9. YOUR Petitioners having thus briefly introduced theſe preliminary Obſervations, moſt humbly requeſt that your Lordſhips' Attention will be particularly directed to the ſucceeding ones, which are as follows:

10. THAT

10. THAT, whilſt they revere the Wiſdom of Parliament in enforcing the Principles of the Act of Navigation, by which alone the juſt Benefits of her Colonies can be ſecured to the parent State, they perſuade themſelves they ſhall be pardoned when they endeavour to point out where Laws paſſed for that Purpoſe preſs with too much Severity upon this Colony, in its preſent State, and obſtruct its Progreſs, in which not only their Intereſt but that of the *Engliſh* Nation is deeply concerned.

11. THAT, in the preſent State of this Colony, a temporary Intercourſe, by Means of *Britiſh* Shipping with the *American* States is of the utmoſt Conſequence and would produce the moſt eſſential Advantages, by increaſing its Inhabitants, and by rendering uſeful and comfortable thoſe already ſettled upon it.

12. THAT your Petitioners find themſelves and this Colony precluded from the aforeſaid Advantages by the late Act, regulating the Intercourſe between the *Britiſh* Colonies and the *American* States, which upon no Emergency will admit of any Perſons bringing with them Houſehold Effects or other Furniture, or any Sorts of Salt Proviſion.

13. THAT they beg Leave further to repreſent that a Number of Loyal Refugees have already ſettled in this Colony, who ſtill have ſome Property and Effects as well as Expectation of Aid and Aſſiſtance from their Friends in the States, but cannot at preſent receive it in any other Mode than Caſh.

14. THAT theſe laſt, as well as ſuch Emigrants as are expected, have been accuſtomed to ſeveral Articles which they cannot be ſo well ſupplied with from any other Country as from the States, and are from Habit real Comforts of Life to them; ſuch as Fruit and Fruit-trees of different Kinds, Bees and Honey; the Length of the Voyage rendering it too expenſive and precarious to bring them from *Europe*.

15. THAT your Petitioners are bold to aſſert, from Experiments already made, that no Part of the United States produces better or more ample Crops of Grain than this Iſland would, if properly inhabited and cultivated; and that it would exceed them in many Kinds both as to Quantity and Quality.

16. AND they appeal to your Lordſhips' Wiſdom, if it be not more beneficial to the Mother Country that uſeful and loyal Subjects ſhould be drawn here from the United States than that your Petitioners ſhould be under the Neceſſity of inviting them from *Great Britain* and *Ireland*.

IF any Apprehenſions have ever been ſuggeſted, of too many emigrating from the States into the *Britiſh* Colonies, it cannot ſurely apply to this Iſland, which has no Mountains or Faſtneſſes, and is ſo interſected with Water that it muſt always remain ſubject to the natural Power of *Great Britain*, as your Petitioners fervently pray it may do to its Government; and, inſtead of Danger, your Petitioners are convinced that ſuch People will give Strength and Stability to theſe Colonies, becauſe they will leave the States, from an Attachment to the King's Government, or with a full Conviction, from Experience, of its Excellence, and the Evils of their preſent, as well as the ſuperior Advantages their Induſtry would derive from ſupplying the *Britiſh* Empire with their Produce, under the Preference of the Navigation Laws.

17. YOUR Lordſhips are well acquainted with the Loyalty of the Quakers of *Pennſylvania*; their Induſtry, Sobriety, and virtuous moral Conduct, as exceeded by no Deſcription of People. The People on the *Hudſon*'s River were alſo remarkable for their Loyalty in the late War; and your Petitioners have been informed,

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informed, and are verily perſuaded, that ~~ſeveral Thouſands~~ a Great Number of the principal Quakers of *Pennſylvania*, as well as Numbers of the People from the *Hudſon*'s River, would remove to this Iſland if they had Opportunity and Encouragement.

18. YOUR Petitioners ſubmit further to your Lordſhips' Conſideration, that the Commerce of the ſaid Iſland, and the Intercourſe with the neighbouring *Britiſh* Colonies, is ſo eſſential to their mutual Safety and Benefit, which are greatly obſtructed by the heavy Charges exacted by the Officers of his Majeſty's Cuſtoms, as well on the Iſland as on the adjacent Coaſt; and, though they are well aware of the Neceſſity of Cuſtom-Houſe Regulations, and that the Service of his Majeſty's Officers ſhould be properly rewarded, they humbly conceive that the ſame may be eſtabliſhed in a Manner more advantageous to the Community at large, as well as the individual Intereſts of his Majeſty's Officers.

THE Situation of *Saint John*'s, as an Iſland, requires a frequent Intercourſe by Shipping with the neighbouring Coaſts; and to and from whence an Exchange of Commodities is frequently an Object to both: it is preſumed, therefore, that it would be of no ſmall Utility to permit *Britiſh* Veſſels to paſs to and from the ſaid Iſland, and to and from any Port or Harbour of his Majeſty's *Britiſh* Colonies Coaſtways, North of *Cape Sable*, upon taking out an annual Licenſe, or under ſimilar Regulations with thoſe adopted in the coaſting Trade of *Great Britain*.

19. YOUR Petitioners therefore pray your Lordſhips to take the Premiſes into Conſideration, and to recommend to Parliament to paſs a public Act, granting, for ſuch Time as to them and their Wiſdom ſhall ſeem meet, Permiſſion for all Perſons emigrating actually as Settlers to this Colony, from any of the United States of *America*, to have Liberty to carry with them, *in Britiſh Veſſels*, their Wearing Apparel, Houſehold Effects, Tools, and Farming Utenſils; and the Remainder of their Property in any Kind of Grain, Flour, Bread, ſalted Proviſions, Cattle, Poultry, Bees, Honey, Fruit, Fruit Trees, Cyder, Perry, Metheglin, Flax, Flax Seed, Hemp, Hemp Seed, and unwrought Iron.

PROVIDED that no Part of the aforementioned enumerated Articles ſhall be reſhipped from the ſaid Iſland of *Saint John* to any other Part except *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, and under ſuch Reſtrictions as may be judged proper; and alſo giving Permiſſion for all ſuch Emigrants, as well as the other Inhabitants of the ſaid Iſland, to import all Manner of Cattle, Fruit, and Fruit Trees, Honey and Bees, the Produce of the ſaid United States, under ſuch Reſtrictions as your Lordſhips ſhall be of Opinion are beſt calculated to prevent illicit Trade; and alſo granting to all ſuch Emigrants, on their becoming actually Settlers, and taking the Oaths of Allegiance to his Majeſty, all the Rights and Privileges of *Britiſh* Subjects, as long as they ſhall continue to reſide on the Iſland.

N. B. Several of the Paragraphs have been read and conſidered, and the Remainder were referred for Conſideration at the next Meeting.